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# SCIENCE

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## THE HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW IN THE TEACHING OF SCIENCE<sup>1</sup>

THE teachers of Missouri should take special interest in the history of science at the present time in view of the fact that the American Association for the Advancement of Science is expected to meet soon in this state and the question of forming a special section of this association for the purpose of considering topics in the history of science is to be raised during this meeting. Teachers of mathematics have an additional reason for taking an unusually keen interest in this subject just now in view of the appearance during the past summer of two very important books on the history of their subject.

One of these is entitled "History of the Theory of Numbers" and was prepared by Professor L. E. Dickson, of the University of Chicago, while the other bears the more general title "A History of Mathematics" and was prepared by Professor Florian Cajori, of the University of California, who holds the unique position of a regular professorship of the history of mathematics in a university. The former book is the first volume of the most complete history of number theory ever written and marks an epoch in American mathematical literature, while the latter is technically only a "revised and enlarged edition" of a book which appeared a quarter of a century ago under the same title, but the changes are so extensive that it too may be regarded as practically a new work.

The history of science should also be of peculiar interest to all educated people at the present time in view of the fact that this history is now being made very rapidly. The important rôle played by science in the recent world war can never be forgotten, especially since it points to a largely increased impor-

<sup>1</sup> Read before the Missouri State Teachers Association, November 7, 1919.